



Fire chief suddenly out in Cannon Beach

Balzer relieved of his duties

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District has relieved Chief Mike Balzer of his duties.

"It was a personnel matter," District President Sharon Clyde said, confirming Balzer had been let go. "I'm

not able to comment much at this time."

The decision was made on Monday night, Oct. 12, during a district meeting.

A five-year annual \$141,469 district levy was approved by voters in 2013 to fund the fire chief's budget, including salary, training and vehicle costs. According to the levy's summary, the fire chief directs 25 volunteer firefighters who respond to about

330 calls annually for emergency medical problems, fires, rescues and accidents, and manages budgets, vehicle, equipment and station maintenance worth over \$4 million.

Assistant Fire Chief Frank Swedenborg, owner of The Waves Cannon Beach, will step in as the interim chief.

Balzer and Swedenborg did not return calls seeking comment.

County and city officials have not commented on the dismissal, or referred the Gazette to Clyde for comment.

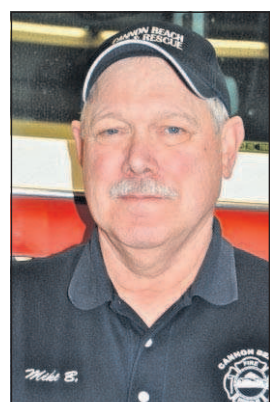
"Everything else will remain the same," Clyde said. "All the services are still top-notch. There will be no interruption in services."

She noted that the district will be working with the Special Districts Association of Oregon on the search process for a permanent fire

chief. There is no timeline for hiring yet.

The Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District provides firefighting and emergency medical service to the North Coast communities of Cannon Beach, Arch Cape and Falcon Cove.

Balzer, 58, started as a volunteer firefighter in the 1980s. A California native, he and his wife came to



CHIEF MIKE BALZER

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A SHAGGY DOG STORY

Genevieve and Jean-Luc take the winners stand.

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach Gazette

The potential for rain didn't keep canines and their owners from the beach for the 18th Annual Dog Show on Saturday.

About 70 dogs and 200 people stopped by the Surfsand Resort in Cannon Beach for the competition, Surfsand Assistant General Manager James Evrard said. The event included over 20 categories with prizes, a raffle and a hot dog

roast. The Clatsop County Animal Shelter also featured dogs for adoption. Proceeds benefit Clatsop Animal Assistance.

Animal Control and Shelter Supervisor Stephen Hildreth said the event provides great exposure for animals in need, and that at least one dog is adopted during the show each year.

Voters given option to renew local tax for school district

Revenue goes toward operational expenses at four local schools

By Katherine Lacaze
EO Media Group

A special election Nov. 3 will give voters in Seaside School District 10 the option to renew a five-year local option tax to fund operations at the district's four schools.

Ballots were sent out Oct. 14, and voters have until Nov. 3 to turn them in.

The question on the ballot asks if the district should renew its \$0.52 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value for five years beginning 2016-17.

The measure renews a current local option tax, in place since 2000 to support the school district, which includes Seaside High School, Broadway Middle School, Seaside Heights Elementary School and Gearhart Elementary School and serves students from Seaside, Gearhart and Cannon Beach. This is the fourth time voters have the option to renew the levy, according to Superintendent Doug Dougherty.

If the measure is approved, the levy will be renewed at the same rate for the next five years, starting with school year 2016-17. Residents will not see an increase because of the local option tax.

According to the state's Department of Revenue, most taxing districts are

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Seaside School District Board of Directors Chairman Steve Phillips discusses a motion to include the Cannon Beach Academy as a public charter school within the district on numerous conditions.

Cannon Beach Academy wins board OK

First year to be limited to kindergarten and first-grade students

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach

Cannon Beach will once again have an elementary school next fall.

Cannon Beach residents cheered after the meeting, excited to have a school once more.

Cannon Beach Elementary closed in 2013 for financial reasons and fears

for student safety. The building, now shuttered, lies in the tsunami inundation zone.

"Congratulations to all of the supporters who worked so hard to bring a school back to the community," wrote Michele Floyd on Cannon Beach Academy's Facebook page after the decision. "Let the learning begin."

The Seaside School District 10 Board of Directors unanimously approved a three-year contract with Cannon Beach Academy on Wednesday evening, Oct. 14, in front of a packed room.

Under the district's conditions, the new charter school will serve a mini-

mum of 44 kindergarten and first-grade students its first year, with the ability to add grades over time. The charter eventually wants to host kindergarten through fifth-grade students.

"We're very willing to work together to compromise," said Ryan Hull, president of the academy's board of directors.

Hull noted he will have to "chew on" the first year grade limit to analyze how it will impact the school, but added he understands the decision from the district's point of view.

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Community College seeks stronger South County ties

Hospitality businesses offer management opportunities

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach Gazette

Clatsop Community College has a strong presence in North County, where its main campus sits. It has served the North Coast and Southwest Washington since 1958, but college representatives acknowledged last week that South Clatsop County is being "underutilized."

Nearly 20 people from the South County business community and Clatsop Community College discussed ideas on how to improve those relations during a meeting Oct. 7.

"The South County

economy is very strong," said Kevin Leahy, executive director of Clatsop Economic Development Resources and the Small Business Development Center. "You have key stakeholders here. There's been ongoing discussion during my four years as director of CEDR and SBDC with the office here in Seaside that the college should be paying more attention to this population."

Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Court Carrier said hospitality and the culinary arts provide a good opportunity for Clatsop Community College to get more in-



Clatsop Community College's Kevin Leahy in front of the South County campus.

involved with job training in the South County area. The college should "focus on matching up training with the needs of the industry, he said.

Carrier cited one Cannon Beach hotel having to close its dining area over the summer because there was no one to run it.

Carrier discussed a hybrid business and hospitality degree at Mount Hood Community College. Even in August Cannon Beach businesses were still hiring to fill positions. Seaside High School Principal Shelia Roley added many students earning college credit in the high school culinary program want to continue with their studies by going onto Portland or other areas for advanced opportunities.

Leahy noted a seafood processor recently experienced difficulty finding a candidate from the local pool to serve as chief financial officer.

Cannon Beach Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn said internships are great tools for South County.

Cannon Beach Police would like Clatsop Community College to bring the criminal justice program back as the department prefers those who know the community well. Between the various law enforcement agencies in the county, there have been 13 personnel hired this year. There is high turnover in smaller agencies, Schermerhorn said, because officers often move onto bigger departments for more opportunities.

Masudur Khan, owner of hotel properties in Seaside, said he "can only train

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